# UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HISTORIC DISTRICT

# **Historic Preservation Plan**

# Prepared for:

Universal City Studios LLLP, L.P. 100 Universal City Plaza Universal City, CA 91608

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#### 1.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

# 1.1 Purpose

In November of 2008, a Historical Resources Technical Report was prepared for Universal City Studios LLLP, L.P. (the "Applicant") to determine if historical resources were present within the Universal Studios property and assess any potential impacts to historical resources by the proposed NBC Universal Evolution Plan. The Technical Report identified forty (40) buildings and one (1) site of historic, cultural, and architectural significance as contributors to a potential Universal Studios Historic District ("Historic District") The Historic District's contributing and non-contributing resources are listed in Table 1.

The purpose of this Historic Preservation Plan (the "Plan") is two-fold:

- To provide appropriate guidance for the rehabilitation<sup>1</sup> of historic buildings, structures, and sites within the Historic District; and
- To establish basic criteria for new construction within the Historic District in order to maintain its historic character.

The Plan will serve as the framework for future repair, maintenance, and alteration and guide architects and designers in designing compatible new construction in the areas identified as potential sites for new buildings within the Historic District. Adjacent contributing buildings provide the design context for new buildings or additions. In general, the Plan does not require any particular type or style of new construction. Instead, the Plan encourages thoughtful, well-proportioned designs employing good quality materials that respect the historic context.

This document should be used in conjunction with the November 2008 Historical Resources Technical Report for Universal City, and technical reference materials, including the "Preservation Briefs" published by the National Park Service, which supplement this Plan.

# 1.2 Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the Plan are as follows:

- Preserve, maintain and rehabilitate buildings of historic, cultural and architectural importance, while ensuring their continued viability as components of a working Universal Studios by providing flexibility for operational requirements.
- Ensure that changes in the built environment within the Historic District respect its historic character.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Rehabilitation is defined by the National Park Service as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values."

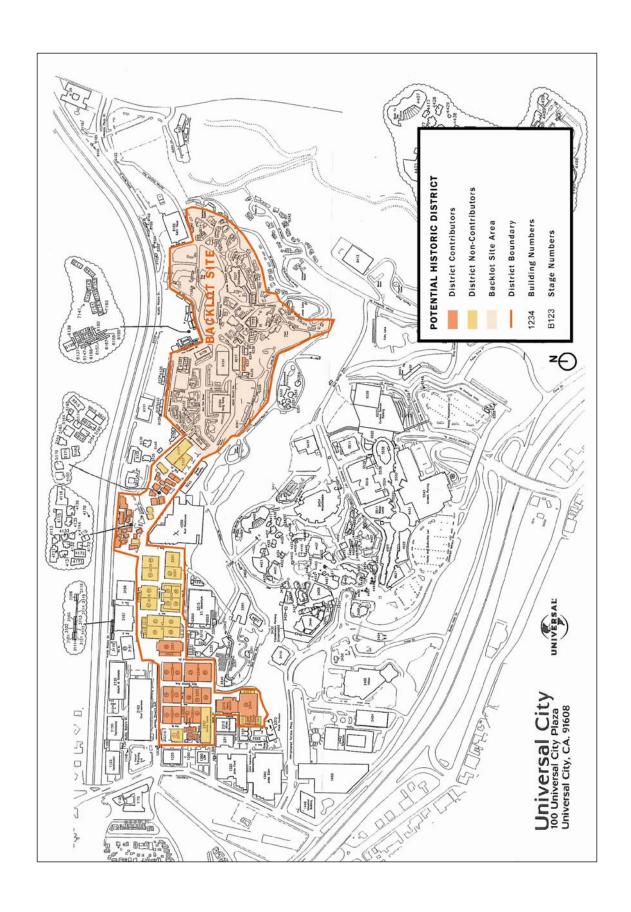
- Respect historic circulation patterns, landscaping, and other features which
  establish the context of the built form of the Historic District through
  maintenance of existing features, replication of missing historic features, or
  the introduction of compatible new features.
- Foster awareness and appreciation of Universal Studios as an important historic resource.

Table 1: Universal City Historic District Resources

| Building No. | Name                      | Construction  | Resource                 | District            |
|--------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
|              |                           | Date          | Type                     | Status              |
| None         | Backlot Site              | c. 1915       | Site                     | Contributor         |
| 2223         | Stages 3 & 4              | 1916/1930     | Stage                    | Contributor         |
| 2225         | Sound Stages              | 1916/1930     | Stage                    | Contributor         |
|              | 16 & 17                   |               |                          |                     |
| 2228         | Sound Stages              | c. 1925       | Stage                    | Contributor         |
|              | 22, 23,                   |               |                          |                     |
| 2230         | Sound Stage 1             | c. 1960       | Stage                    | Non-                |
|              |                           |               |                          | contributor         |
| 2243         | Power House               | c. 1920       | Utility                  | Contributor         |
| 2250         | Jack Webb                 | 1940          | Office                   | Contributor         |
| 2252         | William Goetz             | 1941          | Office                   | Contributor         |
|              | Bldg.                     |               |                          |                     |
| 2263         | Stages                    | 1916/1938     | Stage                    | Contributor         |
|              | 5 & 6                     |               |                          |                     |
| 2265         | Sound Stages              | c. 1928       | Stage                    | Contributor         |
| 22.52        | 18, 19 and 20             | 4000          |                          |                     |
| 2268         | Sound Stages              | 1939          | Stage                    | Contributor         |
| 2202         | 24 and 25<br>Verna Fields | 1014/1057     | Ct 1'-                   | 37                  |
| 2282         |                           | 1914/1957     | Studio                   | Non-<br>contributor |
| 2315         | Bldg.<br>Henry            | /1960<br>1928 | Services<br>Stage, post- | Contributor         |
| 2313         | Mancini Bldg.             | 1926          | production               | Contributor         |
| 2333         | Jack Foley                | 1963          | Stage                    | Non-                |
| 2333         | Stage                     | 1903          | Stage                    | contributor         |
| 2345         | Sound Stage 12            | 1928          | Stage                    | Contributor         |
| 2347         | Sound Repair              | 1959          | Shop                     | Non-                |
| 2547         | Shop                      | 1555          | Shop                     | contributor         |
| 2353         | Storage                   | 1959          | Storage                  | Non-                |
|              | 1                         |               |                          | contributor         |
| 3205         | Power House               | 1964          | Utility                  | Non-                |
|              |                           |               |                          | contributor         |
| 3212         | Backlot Café              | After 1964    | Studio Services          | Non-                |
|              |                           |               |                          | contributor         |
| 3213         | Office                    | Post 1964     | Office                   | Non-                |
|              |                           |               |                          | contributor         |
| 3225         | Stage                     | c.1960        | Stage                    | Non-                |
|              |                           |               |                          | contributor         |
| 3228         | Stage                     | c. 1960       | Stage                    | Non-                |
|              |                           |               |                          | contributor         |
| 3243         | Stage                     | 1964          | Stage                    | Non-                |
| 22.52        | The same                  | 4000          |                          | contributor         |
| 3250         | Phantom Stage             | 1939          | Storage                  | Contributor         |
|              | Storage                   |               |                          |                     |

| Building No. | Name                                   | Construction               | Resource                   | District            |
|--------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
|              |  | Date                       | Type                       | Status              |
| 3251         | Sound Stage 28<br>("Phantom<br>Stage") | 1924                       | Stage                      | Contributor         |
| 3265         | Soundstages<br>33, 34, 35, and<br>36   | 1959                       | Stage                      | Non-<br>contributor |
| 3267         | Soundstage 37                          | c.1970                     | Stage                      | Non-<br>contributor |
| 3269         | Rehearsal Hall                         | c. 1970                    | Stage                      | Non-<br>contributor |
| 4111         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1944 (81)<br>c. 1950 (414) | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4113         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1941                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4115         | Office Bldg. C                         | 1946                       | Office Building            | Contributor         |
| 4118         | Office Bldg. D                         | c. 1945                    | Office Building            | Contributor         |
| 4131         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1940                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4132         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1941                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4133         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1941                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4135         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1944                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4136         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1940                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4144         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1940                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4171         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1955                    | Admin. and<br>Office       | Contributor         |
| 4172         | Office Bldg./<br>Dressing Room         | 1925 (portion)             | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Non-<br>contributor |
| 4173         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1930                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 4175         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1925                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5162         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1941                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5163         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1950                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5164         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1940                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5165         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1940                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5166         | Office                                 | c. 1990                    | Office                     | Non-<br>contributor |
| 5170         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1960                    | Office                     | Non-<br>contributor |
| 5171         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | 1954                       | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5174         | Office<br>Bungalow                     | c. 1940                    | Office/Service<br>Bungalow | Contributor         |
| 5177         | Storage<br>Building                    | c. 1965                    | Storage                    | Non-<br>contributor |
| 5180         | Office                                 | c. 1960                    | Office/Service             | Non-                |

| Building No. | Name            | Construction | Resource        | District    |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
|              |                 | Date         | Type            | Status      |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        | contributor |
| 5182         | Office          | c. 1955      | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 5183         | Office          | c. 1945      | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 5184         | Office          | 1941         | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 5185         | Office          | 1928 (106)   | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 5186         | Office          | 1953         | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 5187         | Office Building | 1964         | Office Building | Non-        |
|              |                 |              |                 | contributor |
| 5195         | Office          | 1926 (105)   | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 5196         | Office          | 1953         | Office/Service  | Contributor |
|              | Bungalow        |              | Bungalow        |             |
| 6237         | Film Vault      | 1946         | Storage         | Contributor |



#### 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT RESOURCES

#### 2.1 Introduction

The Historical Resources Technical Report identified forty (40) buildings and the backlot site as contributing resources to the Historic District. Buildings are categorized into property types identified as historically significant to the production of film on the site. Each type has its own method of construction and associated materials. With few exceptions, most of the contributing buildings are functional in nature and are not representative of any particular architectural style.

The Universal Studios backlot site is an area of open space adjacent to the motion picture production facilities where large-scale, semi-permanent sets were built for outdoor filming. Backlots were defining features of the leading film studios from the film industry's formative years and the Studio Era. While all studios maintained an area containing outdoor sets, not all of these were considered "backlots" in the traditional sense. The outdoor sets at studios such as Paramount and Warner Bros., were centrally located on the studio property with little separation between administrative and production facilities. Other studios maintained studio "ranches" at another location. The term "backlot" as used in this report, specifically identifies separate but adjacent facilities, exclusively dedicated to outdoor filming. In this sense, the Universal Studios backlot is the only remaining studio backlot in Southern California. The Twentieth Century-Fox backlot was sold off around 1960 and developed as Century City. The MGM (now MGM/Sony) backlot was sold off in the mid-1970s. Warner Bros., which never had a traditional backlot, did acquire the nearby Columbia ranch in the early 1990s for outdoor filming use. This land, however, is at a separate location and has no historic association with Warner Bros.

No buildings were found to be individually significant architecturally. Instead, the overall location, relationship of uses, and circulation, give the complex its significance due to its association with the development of the motion picture industry in the United States.

# 2.2 Property Types

Eight property types were identified as historically significant. They are: stages, theaters, studio service buildings, utilities, storage buildings, film vaults, office buildings, and office/service bungalows. While all building types are represented within the Historic District, representatives of five types have retained sufficient integrity to qualify as contributors to the Historic District.

# 2.2.1 Architectural Styles

The Historic District contains contributing buildings constructed between 1912 and 1958. They are largely vernacular buildings that are not representative of any one architectural style. Stages, utilities, and storage structures are utilitarian buildings devoid of stylistic elements or decorative detailing. Office buildings tend to be more architecturally expressive, displaying elements of Period-influenced vernacular styles.

The collection of office/service bungalows, historically used as offices for producers, writers, directors, actor's dressing rooms, and services were constructed on a

residential model. These buildings display aspects of Period Revival, Moderne, and Minimal Traditional architectural styles reflective of Southern California residential neighborhoods prior to 1960.

#### **2.2.2 Stages**

The stages within the Historic District are clustered in the northwestern corner of the Applicant's property. There are nine (9) contributing buildings of this property type within the Historic District. All were designed in a functional, utilitarian style devoid of decorative detailing and have been modified or re-configured over the years.



Stages 24 and 25 Building No. 2268



Stages 5 and 6
Building No. 2263

**Building Numbers:** 2223, 2225, 2228, 2230, 2263, 2265, 2268, 2345,

3251,

Construction Method: Reinforced concrete and/or wood frame with stucco

exterior

**Character-defining Features:** Large, rectangular masses of two or more stories

Windowless facades

Protruding entrance bays

Recessed entry doors

Trussed roof systems

### 2.2.3 Office Buildings

Four (4) contributing buildings to the Historic District are classified as office buildings due to their historic use and similar construction type. All of these are vernacular, two-story buildings with stucco exteriors. Some office buildings display the decorative detailing of architectural styles popular in Southern California in the 1930s and 1940s. Others are more utilitarian with minimal architectural detailing. While the interiors have often been modified many times over the years, the buildings retain their basic exterior detailing.





Jack Webb Office Building Building No. 2250

William Goetz Office Building Building No. 2252

**Building Numbers:** 2250, 2252, 4115, 4118

Construction Method: Reinforced concrete or wood frame with stucco

exterior

Character-defining Features: Two-story, rectangular massing

Steel frame, divided-light casement windows; wood

sash, multiple light windows

Front entry surrounds with pilasters and pediments

Recessed entry doors

#### 2.2.4 Office/Service Bungalows

The majority of contributing buildings within the Historic District are single-story bungalows historically used as offices, actor's dressing rooms, or for service functions. Twenty-four (24) buildings of this type are considered contributors to the Historic District. Most are vernacular buildings that display the detailing of residential architectural styles popular in Southern California from the 1930s through the 1950s. While the interiors have often been modified many times over the years, the buildings retain their basic exterior detailing.





Office Bungalow Building No. 4144

Office Bungalow Building No. 5185-5195

**Building Numbers:** 4111, 4113, 4131, 4132, 4133, 4135, 4136, 4144, 4171, 4173, 4175, 5162, 5163, 5164, 5165, 5171,

5174, 5182, 5183, 5184, 5185, 5186, 5195, 5196

Construction Method: Wood frame with stucco exterior

Character-defining Features: One-story, rectangular massing

Steel frame, divided-light casement windows; wood frame, divided-light casement windows; wood

double-hung sash windows

Front entry surrounds with pilasters, pediments

Metal awnings

Fixed wooden shutters

#### 2.2.5 Utilities

Film studios in the years prior to World War II maintained utility functions to provide the power, heating, cooling, and water necessary to support film production. The Historic District includes a Power House dating from the early 1920s.



Power House Building No. 2243

Building Number: 2243

Construction Method: Reinforced concrete with stucco exterior

**Character-defining Features:** Large, two-story rectangular mass

Façade characterized by protruding vertical piers

and recessed bays

Windowless facade

Gable roof with shallow eaves

#### 2.2.6 Film Vault

The need to house film required the construction of specialized structures designed for film storage. Film vaults were constructed of concrete with heavy metal doors due to the volatile nature of the nitrate film stocks used prior to 1950. The Historic District includes one contributing facility dedicated to film storage.



Film Vault
Building No. 6237

Building Numbers: 6237

**Construction Method:** Reinforced concrete with metal panel doors

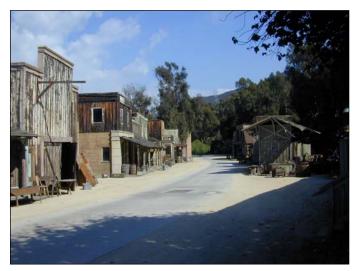
Character-defining Features: Concrete, rectangular massing

Utilitarian, windowless façade

Specialized, heavy metal doors

#### 2.3 Backlot Site

A backlot site is defined as the area adjacent to the production and administrative facilities where large-scale, semi-permanent sets were built for outdoor filming. The backlot site within the Historic District holds important associations with the activity of film making and its contours and features have been shaped by film making activity over time.



Backlot Site
Western Street

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Location in the northeastern portion of the studio district

Circulation pattern of streets, roads, and trails

Large scale sets recreating different streetscapes and locations arranged along key segments of the circulation system

Setting of hills, hillsides, and valleys

# 3.0 GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION, MAINTENANCE, & REPAIR

# 3.1 General Principals of Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior has established standards for the preservation of historic properties. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures<sup>2</sup> (the "Standards"), have been widely used to guide Federal, State, and local agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities.

According to the Standards, rehabilitation is "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural value." The Standards are attached as **Appendix A**.

The Plan's guidelines for rehabilitation, maintenance, repair, and alteration within the Historic District are based, in part, on the Standards and include the following principles:

- i Where maintenance, repair, and alteration of contributing buildings is required, such rehabilitation should respect the historic significance and architectural character of the structure.
- ii The ability of the site to continue as a working studio is of utmost importance, therefore, these guidelines shall be applied in a manner which provides for operational flexibility.
- iii Where new uses are required, adapt contributing buildings for reuse, if feasible and appropriate to the historic integrity of the structure.
- iv Replacement of contributing structures for the same use shall only occur where it is not feasible to upgrade and/or expand a contributing building for continued use.

#### 3.2 Pre-Rehabilitation Assessment

Prior to commencing rehabilitation on any contributing building, the following guidelines should be followed:

- i Identify, retain, and preserve features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building as it appeared during the period of significance. These features may include, but are not limited to, walls and surface finishes, railings, windows, doors, steps, and porches.
- ii Evaluate the overall condition of the material to determine whether repairs to features are necessary.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Codified in 36 Code of Federal Regulations 67.

- iii Clean materials only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
- iv If necessary, obtain rehabilitation treatments for specific materials prior to commencing any work.

#### 3.3 Exterior Materials

#### 3.3.1 Concrete

Exterior features as well as exterior surfaces that remain from the period of significance are important in defining the historic character of the building.

Buildings which have concrete exteriors may exhibit the following conditions: impact damage at building corners; cracks; damage due to spalling; damaged ornamentation of friezes and columns; peeling paint; inappropriate patching methods. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of concrete is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Concrete:**

- 1. Repair walls and other features where there is evidence of deterioration such as spalling, damp walls, or damaged concrete.
- 2. Sandblasting shall not be used to prepare or clean exterior masonry.
- 3. Repair masonry or concrete features by patching, piecing-in, or consolidating the masonry. Repair may also include the limited replacement in kind, or with compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of masonry features when there are surviving prototypes, such as plaster brackets.
- 4. Install new masonry or concrete features such as steps or door pediments when the historic feature is completely missing. This should be an accurate reconstruction using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation when available. If documentation is not available, this may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.
- 5. It is recommended, but not required, that the building be repainted with colors that are historically appropriate to the building and the Historic District.

#### References:3

Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service website: http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

Preservation Brief 15: Preservation of Historic Concrete: Problems and General Approaches

Preservation Brief 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Buildings Exteriors

Preservation Brief 23: Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster

Preservation Brief 37: Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing

#### 3.3.2 Stucco

Exterior features (cornices and door pediments, window architraves, brackets and railings) as well as exterior surfaces and their treatment (modeling, tooling, bonding patterns, joint size, and color) are important in defining the historic character of the building.

Buildings which have stucco exteriors may exhibit the following conditions: impact damage at building corners; cracks; damage due to spalling; damaged ornamentation of friezes and columns; peeling paint; inappropriate patching methods. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of stucco is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Stucco:**

- 1. Repair walls and other features where there is evidence of deterioration such as spalling, damp walls, or damaged stucco.
- 2. Sandblasting shall not be used to prepare or clean exterior stucco.
- 3. Repair stucco by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color, and texture.
- 4. Repair may also include the limited replacement in kind, or with compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes, such as plaster brackets.
- 5. Install a new feature such as door pediments or friezes when the historic feature is completely missing. This should be an accurate reconstruction using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation when available. If documentation is not available, this may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.
- 6. It is recommended, but not required, that the building be repainted with colors that are historically appropriate to the building and the Historic District.

#### References:4

Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings

Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic buildings

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

Preservation Brief 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Buildings Exteriors

Preservation Brief 22: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco

Preservation Brief 23: Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster

Preservation Brief 37: Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in

Historic Housing

#### 3.3.3 Wood

Some buildings within the Historic District have wood elements such as wood frame windows, pilasters, pediments, fixed shutters, and rafters.

Wooden features may exhibit the following conditions: deteriorating material, sealing, paint, eaves, or trim due to weathering. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of wood is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Wood:**

- 1. Evaluate the overall condition of the wood to determine the extent of protection and maintenance required.
- 2. Repair wood features by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods. Repair may also include the limited replacement in kind, or with compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features where there are surviving prototypes such as brackets, moldings, or sections of siding.
- 3. Design and install a new wood feature such as a cornice or doorway when the historic feature is completely missing. This should be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation. Where documentation does not exist, a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building may be used.
- 4. Apply compatible paint coating systems following proper surface preparation. Sandblasting shall not be used to prepare or clean historic wood exterior elements. Paint shall match existing surface thickness.
- 5. It is recommended, but not required, that the building be repainted with colors that are historically appropriate to the building and the Historic District.

#### References:5

Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings Preservation Brief 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

Preservation Brief 13: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Preservation Brief 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

#### 3.3.4 Architectural Metals

Some buildings within the Historic District have elements of architectural metal such as cast iron, steel, copper, aluminum, and zinc. These features include façade elements, columns, canopies, windows, stairways, rails, doors, and hardware.

Architectural metal features may exhibit weathering and corrosion. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of metal is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Architectural Metals:**

- Identify, retain, and preserve architectural metal features and their finishes and colors. Metal features include columns, capitals, window hoods, canopy cladding or fascia, or stairways that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building.
- 2. Clean architectural metal, when necessary, with gentle nonabrasive cleaning methods to remove corrosion. Sandblasting shall not be used to clean historic metal surfaces.
- 3. Apply appropriate paint or other coating systems after cleaning in order to decrease the corrosion rate of metals or alloys.
- 4. Repair architectural metal features by patching, splicing, or otherwise reinforcing the metal. Repairs may also include the limited replacement in kind, or with a compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes such as porch balusters, steel sash windows, or porch cresting.
- 5. Design and install a new architectural metal feature such as an entry door or sheet metal cornice when the historic feature is completely missing. It may be an accurate reconstruction using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.
- 6. If originally painted, it is recommended, but not required, that the architectural metals be repainted with colors that are historically appropriate to the building and the Historic District.

#### References:6

Preservation Brief 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

#### 3.4 Exterior Features

#### 3.4.1 Doors, Entrances, and Porches

Doors, entrances, and porches are often the principal features of historic buildings, particularly when they occur on primary elevations. Their functional and decorative features, such as the type of door, steps, balustrades, and entrances or porches are extremely important in defining the overall historic character of a building. Their retention, protection, and repair should always be carefully considered when planning any maintenance or alteration work.

The current inventory of entry doors varies per building. Stage doors, secondary or utility doors are generally solid panel wood or metal clad.

Doors and porches are subject to weathering and deterioration as are their associated attachments, flashing and hardware. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of doors, entrances, and porches is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Doors, Entrances and Porches:**

- 1. Identify, retain, and preserve entrances and their functional and decorative features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as doors, transoms, sidelights, pilasters, entablatures, columns, balustrades, and stairs.
- Protect and maintain the masonry, wood, and architectural metal that comprise entrances and porches through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coating systems, replacement of broken glass, and replacement of deteriorated sealants or glazing compounds.
- 3. Repair entrances and porches by reinforcing the historic materials. Repair will also generally include the limited replacement in kind, or with compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of repeated features where there are surviving prototypes such as balustrades, cornices, entablatures, columns, sidelights, and stairs.
- 4. Design and construct a new entrance or porch if the historic entrance or porch is completely missing. It may be a reconstruction based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building.
- 5. Design and install additional entrances or porches where required for the new uses in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building. In general, such alterations should be limited to non-character defining elevations. New entrances and porches shall be compatible and may be of contemporary design provided that they do not destroy character-defining features. To the extent feasible, new entrances and porches shall be reversible.

#### References:7

Preservation Brief 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork Preservation Brief 27: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron Preservation Brief 44: The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design

#### 3.4.2 Windows

The type and size of window openings are important in defining the overall historic character of a building. Their retention, protection, and repair should always be carefully considered when planning rehabilitation work.

Wood sash, wood multi-light casement, steel multi-light casement, awning, and fixed metal windows are all represented within the Historic District. Double-hung, casement or fixed wood windows are typical of the smaller residential scale structures. Some windows feature decorative wood shutters.

Metal openings are subject to corrosion, while wood windows or doors may wear out from hard use, warping, or settling. Glazed openings may shatter. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of windows is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Windows:**

- 1. Identify, retain, and preserve historic window features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. Such features include frames, sash, muntins, glazing, sills, heads, hoodmolds, and exterior shutters.
- 2. Protect and maintain the wood and architectural metal, which comprise the window frame, sash, muntins, and surrounds through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems.
- 3. Make windows weathertight and improve thermal efficiency by re-caulking and replacing or installing weatherstripping.
- 4. Design and install new windows when historic windows (frame, sash, and glazing) are completely missing, have been replaced with non-original materials, or are too deteriorated to repair. The replacement windows shall be an accurate reconstruction using in-kind materials based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.
- 5. Replace glass with non-reflective glass to match historic configuration. Double-glazing is permitted if it is not reflective or solar glass.

#### References:6

Preservation Brief 3: Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings Preservation Brief 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

Preservation Brief 13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows Preservation Brief 44: The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design

#### 3.4.3 Roofs

The roof, with its shape (flat, gabled, or shed), features, size, color and patterning of materials (wood shingles, composition) is a contributing factor in defining the building's overall historic character. In addition to the design role it plays, a weathertight roof is essential to the preservation of the entire structure. Thus, protecting and repairing the roof is a critical aspect of a rehabilitation project.

Several different types of roofs exist in the Historic District today. The most common pitches are flat, gabled, shed, and hipped. Coverings include wood shingles, asphalt shingles, composition roll roofing, and red tile. Where maintenance, repair or alteration of roofs is to be performed, the guidelines below should be followed.

#### **Guidelines for Roofs:**

- 1. Protect and maintain a roof by cleaning and refinishing coping, cleaning the gutters and downspouts, and replacing deteriorated flashing. Roof sheathing should also be checked for proper venting to prevent moisture condensation and water penetration, and to insure that materials are free from insect infestation.
- 2. Provide adequate anchorage for roofing material to guard against wind damage and moisture penetration.
- 3. Repair a roof by reinforcing the historic materials which comprise roof features, including cornice lines, exposed rafter tails, brackets, and soffits. Replacement or repairs should be in-kind, or with compatible substitute material. When replacing the roof, remove existing membrane down to wood decking. Inspect exposed decking and replace deteriorated wood members.
- 4. Install mechanical service equipment on the roof so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.
- 5. Repair broken gutters and downspouts. If repair is not possible, replace in kind to match existing. Re-solder broken joints. Where missing, replicate historic gutters and downspouts or provide compatible new gutters and downspouts.

#### References:8

Preservation Brief 4: Roofing for Historic Buildings

Preservation Brief 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs

Preservation Brief 30: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs

Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

# 3.5 Health and Safety Code Compliance

It is often necessary to make modifications to an historic building so that it can comply with current health, safety and code requirements. Such work needs to be carefully planned and undertaken so that it does not result in a loss of interior or exterior character-defining spaces, features, and finishes.

#### **Guidelines for Code Compliance**

- 1. Identify the historic building's character-defining spaces, features, and finishes so that code-required work will not result in their damage or loss.
- 2. Comply with health and safety codes, including seismic codes and barrier-free access requirements, in such a manner that character-defining spaces, features, and finishes are preserved to extent feasible.
- 3. Use of the current edition of the California Historical Building Code.
- 4. New structural or seismic reinforcement members, including anchor bolts, shall be hidden from view wherever possible.

#### References:9

Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible

Preservation Brief 37: Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing

Preservation Brief 41: The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping

Preservation in the Forefront

Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

#### 3.6 Additions and Relocation

#### 3.6.1 Additions

Additions to buildings can change their historic appearance. Therefore, an exterior addition should be considered only after it has been determined that the new use cannot be successfully met by altering non-character-defining interior spaces. In designing an addition, consideration should be given to the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic areas of the Historic District.

#### **Guidelines for Additions:**

- New additions should be designed and constructed so that the exterior characterdefining features of the historic buildings are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed in the process of rehabilitation. To the extent feasible, new additions shall be reversible.
- 2. New design should always be compatible yet clearly differentiated so that the addition does not appear to be historic.
- 3. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building.
- 4. The new design should be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and colors.

#### References:10

Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns.

#### 3.6.2 Relocations

If retention of a contributing building at its present site is not feasible, relocation of the structure to another appropriate location within the studio lot shall be considered. Historically, there is a precedent for the relocation of structures both to and within the lot. While relocation of historic structures is often inappropriate to individual buildings in a community, there is strong justification for this option in the context of movie studio operations.

#### **Guidelines for Relocation:**

1. Relocate the building in an appropriate setting in order to retain its integrity of design, materials, feeling and association.

Preservation Briefs are available at the National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

2. A relocated structure should still have an orientation, setting and general environment that is comparable and compatible, to the extent feasible, with the property's significance.

#### 3.7 Documentation Procedures

Before undertaking a project to alter, relocate, or demolish any contributing building, or the backlot site, a consultant who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History and/or Historic Architecture shall first conduct a review of the impact of such action on the Historic District and the extent to which such action conforms to the provisions of the Plan.

Prior to any alteration, relocation, or demolition of any contributing building or the initial alteration, relocation, or demolition of the backlot site, an Historic Structures Report will be prepared. The report shall document the significance and physical condition of all contributing buildings and the backlot site through photographs, text, and existing drawings.

One original copy of the documentation as specified below shall be assembled and offered to each of the following:

- a) One set shall be sent to the Southern California Information Center at California State University Fullerton.
- b) One set shall be offered to and, if accepted, deposited in the archives of the Los Angeles Conservancy.
- c) One set shall be offered to and, if accepted, deposited in the archives of Hollywood Heritage.
- d) One set shall be offered to and, if accepted, deposited in the archives of the City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources.
- e) One set shall be offered to and, if accepted, deposited in the Central Library of the Los Angeles Public Library.

#### **Guidelines for Documentation:**

Documentation shall include:

- 1. A brief written historic and descriptive report completed in narrative format, including an architectural data form for each contributing building
- 2. A site plan showing the location of the building. This site plan shall include a photo key.
- 3. A sketch floor plan shall accompany each architectural data form.

- 4. Large format (4" x 5" negative or larger) photographs in accordance with Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) guidelines. Views shall include contextual views, all exterior elevations, detailed views of significant exterior architectural features, and interior views of significant historical architectural features or spaces (if any).
- 5. Field photographs (35 mm) based on HABS guidelines. Views should correspond to those in the large format photographs.
- 6. The report shall include available historic photographs and historic or current plans.
- 7. In lieu of measured drawings, the overall setting of the Historic District, the backlot site, and any contributing buildings to be demolished may be recorded using digital photography, scanned photographs, and imagery to establish a digital documentation database.

#### 4.0 GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

#### 4.1 Introduction

As Universal City evolves within the NBC Universal Evolution Plan, its built form and open space will be altered by new construction. The integrity of the Historic District can be retained through the application of criteria established for the specific features and function of this site.

This section provides criteria for new construction within the Historic District and has the following purposes and uses:

- To ensure that new construction within the Historic District is compatible with the historic character of the Historic District and its contributing resources;
- to ensure that the integrity of the Historic District is maintained;
- to mitigate any potential impact on the Historic District from new construction to a level of insignificance under the CEQA; and
- to be used by planners, architects, designers, owners, and users as a
  reference to successfully integrate new buildings, landscape, circulation and
  any other additions within the Historic District while meeting the functional
  and programmatic requirements of continued, adaptive, and new uses within
  the Historic District.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards) provide general guidelines for treating a range of historic resources. Standards 9 and 10 are written for additions to existing buildings. Therefore, they are relevant to an approach for new construction within historic districts, and provide the underlying principals for the criteria provided here. Standards 9 and 10 are as follows:

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. (Standard 9)

New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. (Standard 10)<sup>11</sup>

For the purposes of this section, the Historic District has been divided into three areas in order to respond more fully to the variety of contributing resources and character-defining features contained within the Historic District. These three areas are the Frontlot, the Midlot, and the Backlot. Specific guidelines for each area are contained in the following pages.

The exigencies of motion picture and television production may necessitate modifications and/or alterations to contributing buildings within the Historic District that do not conform to the guidelines set forth in the Plan. There is historic precedent for the modification of buildings in the Historic District to accommodate motion

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Preservation Assistance Division, Washington, D.C. 1992

picture and television productions. Modifications to contributing buildings that may not conform to the Plan guidelines are permitted provided that: (a) the building is documented prior to modification; and (b) the building is rehabilitated to its condition prior to modification within twenty-four (24) months after the completion of the production-related use of the contributing building.

#### 4.2 New Construction: Frontlot

#### 4.2.1 Overview of the Frontlot

The Frontlot comprises the western portion of the Historic District and represents Universal Studio's historic core. Dominated by stage buildings, the Frontlot contains the largest buildings within the Historic District. Existing uses are primarily technical support functions such as a Foley stage, editing facilities, and dressing rooms, as well as office buildings.

In addition to providing production and support facilities for film and television, the Frontlot is currently an important part of the Universal Studios Hollywood Studio Tour. Large-scale promotional signage affixed to various building facades is an integral part of the Tour.

#### 4.2.2 Contributing Resources and Character-defining Features

# Stage Buildings

The Frontlot contains twenty-seven (27) buildings of which thirteen (13) are classified as contributing resources. Nine (9) of the contributing resources located in the Frontlot area are stage buildings. These are buildings 2223, 2225, 2228, 2230, 2263, 2265, 2268, 2345, and 3251. The stage buildings are generally wood and/or steel framed structures with exterior walls finished by conventional painted sand finish cement plaster (stucco). They are typically aggregated into clusters of two or four buildings separated by proportionately narrow circulation spaces used for vehicular access and parking aprons. The existing color patterns in this area are simple, neutral field colors on large plain surfaces, with dark accents at the bottom skirts and openings (doors and windows).

#### Character-defining features:

- 1. Functional design, devoid of decorative features.
- 2. Rectangular footprint.
- 3. Tall walls without articulation of levels.
- 4. Flat or low pitched roofs.
- 5. Flat parapets or simple eaves without wide overhangs.
- 6. Exposed structural system elements such as trusses, columns, and beams.
- 7. Membrane roofs.
- 8. Painted cement plaster and metal panel walls.
- 9. Few openings; characteristic openings are large doorways for stage loading, personnel doors, and small windows for occasional office spaces.
- 10. Painted wood or ferrous metal doors and windows.
- 11. Unscreened and unburied electrical system equipment and distribution.
- 12. Unscreened HVAC and plumbing systems equipment and distribution, on the ground, at walls, and on roofs.

- 13. Neutral field colors with darker accent colors associated with functional features or uses (e.g., skirts, trim, doors, windows).
- 14. Functional, efficient lighting sources and fixtures.

# **Utility Buildings**

The Power House, building 2243, is a contributing resource. This purely functional concrete structure is contiguous with two stage buildings and is consistent with the utilitarian, industrial pattern that characterizes the stages.

#### Office Buildings

Two of the contributing resources located in the Frontlot area are office buildings. Buildings 2250 and 2252 are two-story, wood frame buildings with painted smooth-troweled cement plaster (stucco) finish. Their proportions, doors, windows, and trims have aspects of the American Colonial Revival architectural style. Both building 2250 and 2252 were relocated from another location to their current pads. The relocation of buildings is understood as a defining characteristic of motion picture studios and is a character-defining feature of the Historic District, primarily for smaller buildings.

#### Character-defining features:

- 1. Residential and small office character with modest decorative details.
- 2. Rectangular footprint.
- 3. Low scale.
- 4. Flat or low pitched roofs.
- 5. Flat parapets.
- 6. Structural system not expressed.
- 7. Membrane roofs.
- 8. Painted cement plaster walls.
- 9. Openings for doors and window in residential scale.
- 10. Residential scaled porches with gabled roofs, pediments, and wood posts.
- 11. Fixed louvered wood shutters at windows.
- 12. Painted wood or ferrous metal divided light doors and windows.
- 13. Screened and hidden electrical system equipment and distribution.
- 14. Screened HVAC and plumbing systems equipment and distribution.
- 15. Neutral field colors with light trim colors and dark doors and sash.
- 16. History of building relocation.

#### Circulation and Open Space

Spaces between and around most of the buildings within the Frontlot provide for circulation and flexible use rather than light, air and amenities. The utilitarian and flexible needs of the Frontlot requires that open space also be used for loading, staging, temporary storage, and other activities that support production, in addition to circulation. Because of these requirements, open space between buildings is in general characterized by utilitarian paving and plants that are limited to small areas of ground cover, ornamental shrubs and trees. The regular arrangement of large rectangular buildings forms a grid pattern.

#### Character-defining features:

- 1. Rectangular grid pattern of open space between stages.
- 2. Linear open spaces that are proportionally narrower than building heights at the stages.
- 3. Utilitarian paving (e.g., asphaltic concrete, uncolored gray concrete without patterns and insets).
- 4. Minimal or no landscape at stages.
- 5. Landscaping, including sod, shrubs, planting beds, and trees at offices.
- 6. Functional, efficient lighting sources and fixtures.
- 7. Unscreened HVAC, electrical, and plumbing equipment and distribution.

#### Setting

The edges of the different areas of the lot do not have consistent edge conditions. The different areas have different characteristics; however, the transitions are abrupt.

#### Character-defining features:

- 1. Movie studio building types and uses.
- 2. Juxtaposition of different areas of building types adjacent to each other at circulation spaces without visual buffers, screens, and transitions from one area to another area.

#### 4.2.3 General Criteria for New Construction within the Frontlot

- a. Comply with height limits, land use, and other provisions in the proposed Universal Studios Specific Plan, including alterations and additions.
- b. Select sites for new construction within the Frontlot that minimize loss of historic character by retaining and recalling the list of character-defining features.
- c. Locate new construction within the Frontlot so as to retain the pattern and limits of existing circulation spaces and building pads.
- d. The character of new buildings shall substantially recall the character of adjacent predominant building types, such as large rectangular footprints with tall, flat, unarticulated walls adjacent to sound stages.
- e. Retain multi-purpose hardscaped spaces between buildings, except adjacent to office buildings.
- f. Signage and promotional graphics, of any quantity, scale, at any location (ground, wall, monument, tower, roof), design (flat, three dimensional), media, lighting source, static, or dynamic, is allowed.
- g. Construct attached exterior additions built as signage, film sets or for studio tour functions in such a manner that they are reversible and do not result in substantial loss of the physical integrity of a contributing building.

#### 4.3 New Construction: Midlot

#### 4.3.1 Overview of the Midlot

The Midlot is the central portion of the Historic District and is composed primarily of bungalows. "Bungalow" is the common studio term for smaller buildings designed and constructed in a residential style built to accommodate office uses. Studio bungalows are found in a variety of styles, configurations, and materials.

Within the Historic District, Bungalows are predominantly aggregated into clusters of small buildings organized around surface parking lots and some landscape features. The western-most cluster is bounded by the River Road to the north and is sited at a lower elevation than the eastern-most cluster. The change in grade defines the two clusters. The form and architectural style of the bungalow buildings, their clustered arrangement, and their landscaping, recall the general characteristics of a twentieth-century Los Angeles residential neighborhood.

The Studio Tour passes by the Midlot, but in general does not enter the area or utilize any of its spaces and buildings directly for attractions and promotion.

#### 4.3.2 Contributing Resources and Character-defining Features

#### Office/Service Bungalows

The Midlot contains thirty-three (33) buildings of which twenty-six (26) are contributing resources. Twenty-four (24) of the contributing resources located in the Midlot area are office bungalows. These are buildings 4111, 4113, 4131, 4132, 4133, 4135, 4136, 4144, 4171, 4173, 4175, 5162, 5163, 5164, 5165, 5171, 5174, 5182, 5183, 5184, 5185, 5186, 5195, and 5196. All are single-story, wood-framed structures with wood or stucco finishes and an eclectic variety of architectural details that includes elements of American Colonial Revival, Moderne, and Minimal-Traditional styles.

Character-defining features include original window and door openings; steel, divided light casement windows; wood sash windows; front porches with pediment roof and wood columns; decorative wood door surrounds; wood fixed shutters; and decorative cornices. All contributing bungalows were relocated from another location to their current sites. The relocation of buildings is understood as a defining characteristic of motion picture studios and is a character-defining feature of the Historic District.

#### Character-defining features:

- 1. Residential and small office character with modest decorative details.
- 2. Rectangular footprint.
- 3. Low scale.
- 4. Flat or low pitched roofs.
- 5. Overhanging eaves; open or boxed.
- 6. Structural system in general not expressed
- 7. Membrane or composition shingled roofs.
- 8. Painted cement plaster walls.
- 9. Openings for doors and window in residential scale; corner windows.

- 10. Residential scaled porches with gabled or flat roofs, pediments, and wood posts.
- 11. Painted wood or ferrous metal divided light doors and windows.
- 12. Screened and hidden electrical system equipment and distribution.
- 13. Screened HVAC and plumbing systems equipment and distribution.
- 14. Neutral field colors with light trim colors and dark doors and sash.
- 15. History of building relocation.
- 16. Minimal, wall-mounted signage, used for building number, wayfinding, and identification of occupants.

# Office Buildings

Two of the contributing resources located in the Midlot area are office buildings (Buildings 4115 and 4118). Both are two-story, wood frame buildings with smooth troweled cement plaster cladding. Character-defining features include original window and door openings; steel, multi-light casement windows; front porches with pediment roof and wood columns; wood fixed shutters; and decorative cornices. Both building 4115 and 4118 were relocated from another location to their current sites. The relocation of buildings is understood as a defining characteristic of motion picture studios and is a character-defining feature of the Universal Studios Historic District.

#### 4.3.3 General Criteria for New Construction within the Midlot

- a. Comply with the proposed height limits, setbacks, land uses and other provisions in the proposed Universal Studios Specific Plan, including alterations, additions, and new buildings.
- b. Select sites for new construction within the Midlot that minimize loss of historic character by retaining and recalling the list of character-defining features.
- c. Locate new construction within the Midlot so as to retain the pattern and scale of existing circulation spaces, decentralized and building-associated parking areas, and informally arranged building pads.
- d. Retain landscaped open spaces, including turf and trees; the retention of shrubs and planting beds is optional.
- e. Graphics and signage are allowed. This type of signage may be two or three dimensional, illuminated, and animated. Such signage may be attached to building walls, but shall not extend beyond building wall corners and eaves, or cover windows and doors. Such signage may be freestanding, but shall not exceed the height or width of immediately adjacent buildings as measured from the highest finished grade of such buildings.
- f. Construct attached exterior additions built as film sets or for studio tour functions in such a manner that they are reversible and do not result in substantial loss of the physical integrity of a contributing building.
- g. Hide or screen HVAC, electrical, and plumbing equipment and distribution.
- h. Exterior lighting shall be low-intensity, hidden in landscaping (e.g., tree-mounted), at or below eye-level with a low cut-off to eliminate visibility of direct lighting sources except for luminaries with diffusing screens wall-mounted at exterior doors or on posts at exterior pedestrian walkways.

i. Existing buildings that were previously moved may be moved again to form new building groups that add compatible new construction while retaining the character-defining features listed for the Midlot.

#### 4.4 New Construction: Backlot

#### 4.4.1 Overview of the Backlot

The Backlot comprises the eastern portion and the largest land area of the Historic District. The entire studio, including the Historic District, serves as a shooting location according to need and fit. The Frontlot stage buildings are purpose-built for interior production. Midlot buildings are built for office functions. The Backlot is primarily used for exterior shooting and attractions constructed as part of the studio tour. Accessory uses in this area include technical support, film vaults, storage, toilets, and dressing rooms.

Sets are arranged along irregular linear (street or road-like) and nodal (plaza or courtyard-like) spaces that are designed for shooting films. The arrangements in general create a number of distinct visual environments that represent particular times and places. In some cases the sets are shallow facades with an unfinished rear. In other cases accessory uses are placed in buildings behind the set facades. Studio tour attractions are also placed in purpose-built structures that are disguised as functional structures that resemble technical support or stage buildings.

The Backlot topography in general slopes upward from north to south. The topography has more slope than the other zones in the Historic District. The topography is utilized in the arrangements of sets, open spaces, and the studio tour routes.

The built fabric of the Backlot does not materially represent the history of this portion of the Historic District. The reconstruction, refinishing, and modification of sets is characteristic of film production and set pieces have been continually reconstructed throughout the Studio's history. Major fires, most recently in 1990 and 2008, have also destroyed substantial portions of the Backlot sets which were reconstructed or replaced as needed. Set reconstruction will continue to meet current market demand. These changes are a constant in the history of the Backlot and an essential characteristic of the studio business.

The evolution of the Backlot includes a consistent pattern of the major open spaces, linear and nodal, among the sets and accessory buildings.

# 4.4.2 Contributing Resources and Character-defining Features

#### Circulation

The major open spaces, linear and nodal, which appear as a circulation pattern of streets, roads, and trails that connect and delineate sub-areas within the Backlot and provide access to storage and support facilities, are character-defining. These spaces have been graded, re-aligned, and re-paved many times, but the basic circulation diagram is substantially intact from Universal Studio's historic period.

#### Sets

The use of the Backlot in part for sets is a character-defining feature of the Historic District.

#### Film Vault

The Backlot contains a film vault (building 6237) that is a contributing building to the Historic District. The film vault is a two story, utilitarian building of steel and concrete construction. Character-defining features of the film vault include the simple, utilitarian articulation of the facades, original door openings, second story cantilevered steel walkway, and exposed exterior system pipes.

#### 4.4.3 General Criteria for New Construction within the Backlot

- a. Comply with the proposed height limits, setbacks, land uses and other provisions in the proposed Universal Studios Specific Plan, including alterations, additions, and new buildings.
- b. Substantially retain the historic circulation diagram, linear and nodal. This diagram is currently found in streets, roads, and trails.
- c. Repair, replace, redesign, dress, and landscape sets as needed for production or attractions.
- d. Integrate new construction for tour attractions into set environments or finish to resemble stage buildings.
- e. Where feasible, use accessory buildings and other uses as set pieces along character-defining circulation spaces. This can be implemented by landscaping, topography, and designing the exterior of accessory buildings to appear as part of a set.
- f. Signage for any purpose is allowed, including promotion. Signage should be integrated into sets and attractions to the extent feasible. There is no limitation as to size, scale, medium, illumination, or any other characteristic. This does not limit the use of any building identification, safety, or code-required signage.
- g. Retain the general topography to the extent feasible.

#### APPENDIX A

# The Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation

- 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- 8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.